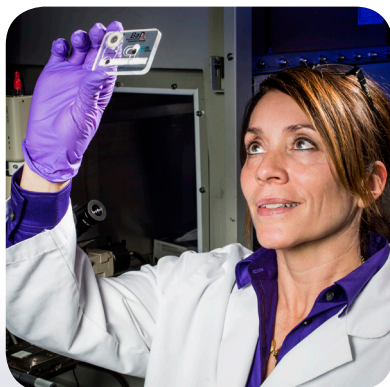


*Exceptional service in the national interest*



# BEST PRACTICES TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND FACILITATE INCLUSION

*A Practical Guide for Leaders*



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Sandia National Laboratories



BEST PRACTICES TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND FACILITATE INCLUSION: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR LEADERS

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# Introduction

The intent of this guide is to provide a set of “best practices” for leaders to promote diversity and facilitate inclusion within their organization and throughout Sandia National Laboratories. These “best practices” are derived from personal experiences and build upon existing resources at Sandia to help us effect change to realize an inclusive work environment.

As leaders, we play a critical role in setting the vision and shaping the culture of the organization by communicating expectations and modeling inclusive behavior. The “best practices” in this guide are presented in the spirit of promoting a learning culture that values continuous improvement in the ongoing effort to make diversity and inclusion an integral part of all that we do at Sandia. This guide seeks to articulate the importance of leading through example, taking positive actions, raising awareness of practices that provide an inclusive environment, and creating a space that welcomes diverse perspectives and input.

*Sandia’s diverse workforce values inclusion. We engage energized and inspired people who spark innovation and achieve mission success.*

Sandia’s Diversity & Inclusion Vision Statement

## KEY TAKEAWAY

To promote diversity and facilitate inclusion, take ownership and move to action.

*“Diversity is about  
being invited to the  
party; inclusion is  
about being asked to  
dance.”*

Verna Myers  
Diversity Consultant

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION DEFINITIONS

Both diversity and inclusion are needed to promote a vibrant workplace culture. In the context of this guide, here is how those two terms are defined:

### Diversity

Diversity refers to all the different characteristics of the people who work at Sandia National Laboratories. Each of us is unique. Our differences and commonalities can be both visible and invisible. These differences can be characterized by culture, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, mental aptitudes, life experiences, health conditions, physical appearance, educational background, family structure, marriage status, value system, religious beliefs, political opinions, or other ideologies. Diversity can also include different social styles and how people interact within a team, in a group setting, or individually with another person. These differences, and many more, all exist at Sandia and we need to ensure that everyone feels included on an equal basis.

### Inclusion

Inclusion refers to the actions that effectively integrates our diverse work force and contributes to a sense of belonging by:

1. Providing an accommodating and nurturing work environment
2. Supporting a collaborative environment that values open participation from individuals with different ideas, approaches, and perspectives
3. Communicating and listening equally to everyone
4. Working effectively together with different and unique people

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Sandia’s Leadership, in collaboration with the Diversity & Inclusion Organization, defines diversity and inclusion as:

Diversity is the mix of differences and commonalities that each and every one of us brings to Sandia.

Inclusion is the act of recognizing, accepting, and valuing our diversity for exceptional service in the national interest.



## VALUE PROPOSITION FOR PROMOTING DIVERSITY

### EQUALITY

Promoting diversity ensures that everyone feels included on an equal basis.

### EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION

Promoting diversity ensures that different types of people are equitably represented throughout the workforce in leadership, technical, programmatic, operational, and support roles.

### STIMULATES INNOVATION

Promoting diversity provides an eclectic workforce that brings different backgrounds, training, individual skills, and experiences to generate novel ideas and develop innovative solutions.

### INSPIRATIONAL

Promoting diversity inspires everyone to perform to their highest potential.

*Research published in 2015 by McKinsey and Company<sup>1</sup> highlights the return on investing in diversity.*

- *Companies that are more gender diverse are 15% more likely to outperform others*
- *Companies that are ethnically diverse are 35% more likely to outperform others*

## VALUE PROPOSITION FOR FACILITATING INCLUSION

### POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Facilitating inclusion provides a welcoming work environment where people are energized, contribute fully, communicate effectively, and continuously grow.

### DELIVER WITH EXCELLENCE

Facilitating inclusion allows us to deliver with excellence by actively seeking alternative perspectives, ideas, and approaches from throughout the work force, resulting in richer and more impactful solutions.

### WORKFORCE ENHANCEMENT

Facilitating inclusion helps us attract, develop, and sustain a diverse workforce with exceptional talent.

### AUTHENTICITY

Facilitating inclusion creates the conditions that make it possible for everyone to bring the full measure of who they are to work every day.

### MORAL IMPERATIVE

Facilitating inclusion is a moral imperative that respects the uniqueness of each and every individual.

<sup>1</sup> Hunt, Vivian; Layton, Dennis; and Prince, Sara, "Diversity Matters", McKinsey & Company, 2-Feb-2015, page 3





*“Stupidity and  
unconscious bias often  
work more damage  
than venality.”*

Bertrand Russell  
British Nobel Laureate

## AVOID UNCONSCIOUS BIAS DECISION MAKING

Unconscious bias refers to a predisposition that we are unaware of which can adversely influence how we make our decisions. This occurs automatically because the number of daily decisions would be overwhelming if each one had to be evaluated individually. Unfortunately, unconscious bias results in quick judgments or assessments of people and situations without using critical thinking and analyzing data or available information. It is the cumulative effect of being influenced throughout our life by personal experiences, social interactions, and cultural or environmental conditions. Therefore, it is important to be cognizant of unconscious bias so our decisions do not inadvertently preclude or limit options necessary to promote diversity and facilitate inclusion.

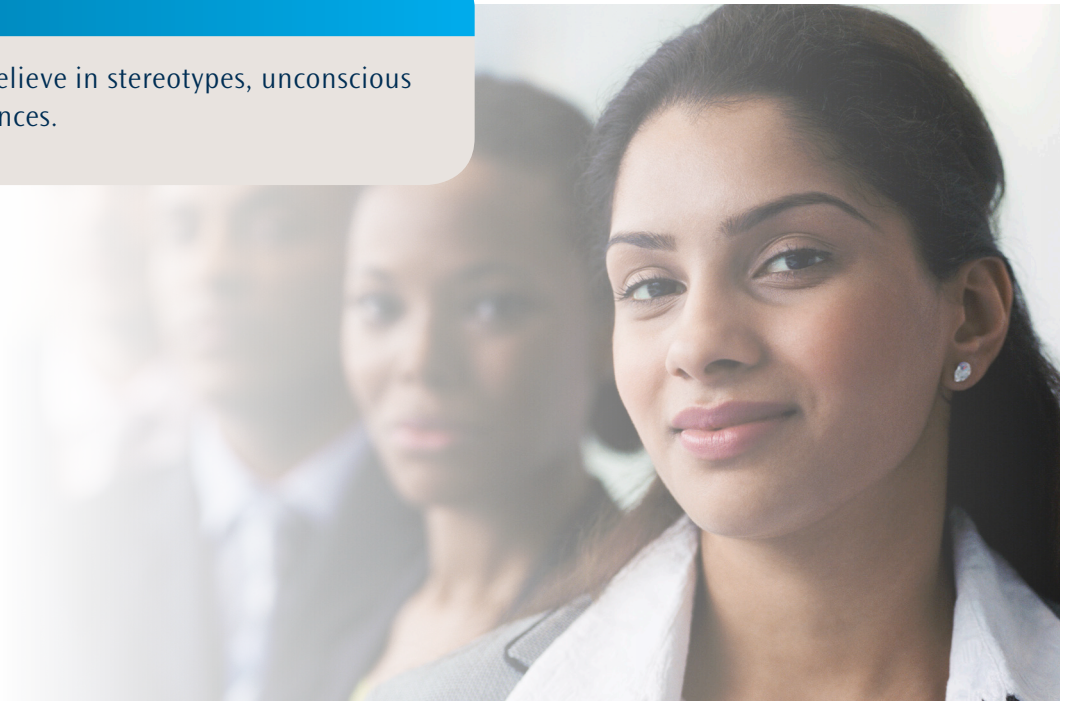
- Unconscious bias is based on pervasive cultural stereotypes
- Unconscious bias has practical consequences because it gives some people unfair advantage and puts others at a disadvantage
- Unconscious bias is just that—it is unconscious, so we may not even realize that it's influencing our decisions

To understand and be aware of unconscious bias in decision making, take training, attend seminars, engage in dialogue, watch instructional videos, and read publications or listen to their audio recordings. Use Sandia's Diversity & Inclusion Organization's resources on unconscious bias, or contact them to facilitate a dialogue on unconscious bias with your team or organization. You can also visit their primary web site:

<https://sharepoint.sandia.gov/sites/Diversity/SitePages/DIO-homepage.aspx>

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Even when we don't consciously believe in stereotypes, unconscious bias can have damaging consequences.





To avoid or mitigate unconscious bias decision making, use the following guidelines:

- Treat everyone as an individual, which means act as if your bias does not exist
- Avoid reaching conclusions based on first impressions with limited data or information
- Use available data and information—do not be seduced by data or information that supports your bias
- Establish a set of objective criteria to evaluate against
- Make time to revisit your decision before committing
- Review decisions with people that are independent and have a different perspective
- Police the behavior of others as you witness or suspect bias
- Include people in your thought-partners or problem-solving network that challenge your decisions
- Focus on performance evidence and data, not on personal characteristics
- Be aware that overcorrecting for a bias can create a new unconscious bias

When making work assignments, avoid unconscious bias that would exclude someone. Don't assume they can't:

- Travel frequently
- Work late or come in early to meet a time-urgent deadline
- Work in an industrial setting or remote test environment
- Learn new technology or processes
- Handle the stress
- Interface with a difficult customer or supplier
- Meet both family and work demands
- Meet deliverables working part-time

*On-line article in 2014, "34 Crucial Tips for Your Next Job Interview,"<sup>2</sup> cites statistics on what personal characteristics influences first impressions in job interviews that resulted from unconscious bias.*

*Statistics show that first impressions are determined by:*

- 55% – The way you dress, act, and walk through the door
- 38% – The quality of your voice, rammar, and confidence
- 7% – The words you choose to say

*In a survey of more than 2,000 hiring managers, 33% claimed to know whether or not they would hire someone within 90 seconds.*

<sup>2</sup> Careertopia, by Bryce Christiansen, October 27, 2014, "34 Crucial Steps for Your Next Job Interview," <http://www.mycareertopia.com/34-crucial-tips-next-job-interview-infographic/>





*“Diversity is valued,  
and it is prized. We  
learn to appreciate  
each other and each  
other’s struggles. From  
diversity, we draw our  
enormous and our  
lasting strength.”*

Janet Reno  
United States Attorney General  
from 1993 until 2001

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As leaders, we recognize that to deliver with excellence requires leveraging our diversity and committing to being accepting, respectful, and inclusive of our individual differences. Applying the following principles, or developing your own, will help guide your decisions for promoting diversity and implementing inclusion.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

As leaders, we need to ensure that everyone feels included on an equal basis.

As leaders, we understand that each individual is unique and recognize our individual differences by being accepting and respectful.

As leaders, we will actively seek for opportunities to integrate our diverse workforce and support productive collaboration.

As leaders, we will set the tone and lead with positive examples by treating everyone with dignity.



## BEST PRACTICES TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND FACILITATE INCLUSION

The following select topical areas are intended to encompass a majority of the leadership opportunities to promote diversity and facilitate inclusion.

### Setting Clear Performance Management Expectations

As a leader, you must set clear and consistent performance management expectations for both work quality and scope, as well as behavioral expectations—the what, when, and how. Use the following actions during performance management to guide behavior that promotes diversity and facilitates inclusion within your organization:

- **Provide the Guiding Principles to set expectations for leadership behavior:** Ensure that everyone feels included on an equal basis. Understand that each individual is unique, and recognize our individual differences by being accepting and respectful. Actively seek for opportunities to integrate our diverse workforce and support productive collaboration. Set the tone and lead with positive examples by treating everyone with dignity.
- **Identify specific deliverables for managers:** Sponsor and lead diversity and inclusion learning and awareness sessions.
- **Ensure expectations are communicated by management:** Expectations for diversity and inclusion are communicated and discussed via staff or management meetings, or through the performance management process.
- **Provide expectations to address poor behavior:** Engage your HR Business Partner to help you provide coaching and counseling for staff or management who do not embrace diversity nor provide an inclusive work environment. Lower their value of contribution metric to reflect poor behavior and communicate the reason for the change directly to the member of the workforce.
- **Solicit performance feedback from customers, partners, suppliers, peers, direct reports, and/or team members:** Obtain feedback on performance behaviors; i.e., communicating respectfully, being inclusive, listening, teaming effectively, and being open to alternative views or ideas.

*“Society is unity in diversity.”*

George Herbert Mead  
American social psychologist

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Use the performance management process to document clear expectations for promoting diversity and facilitating inclusion.

*Seek guidance and review of interview questions from HR Business Partners and Organizational Development professionals.*

## Recruiting, Interviewing, and Hiring Practices

To realize a diverse and inclusive work force, actively seek out and recruit qualified female and minority candidates for openings.

- Build a recruiting team that reflects diversity
- Target universities that have a diverse student population in relevant disciplines
- Target multiple universities for intellectual diversity
- Advertise in journals that target a variety of related disciplines and demographics

You can tailor your hiring and interviewing practices or processes to be inclusive and improve the diversity of your work force.

- Seek guidance from HR Business Partners to write a job posting that encourages a diverse applicant pool to apply by eliminating gender biased language for the required and desired qualifications
- Create a rubric from your required and desired qualifications and follow it explicitly as you evaluate candidates to avoid “qualification creep” in your decision making
- Conduct an anonymous (no name) resume review and rank order to minimize unconscious bias in decision making
- Use interview questions that focus on the required competencies and behaviors, and listen for responses that indicate how the candidate would contribute to a safe and inclusive work environment
  - » Seek guidance and review of interview question from HR Business Partners and Organizational Development professionals
- Establish a balanced interview panel
  - » Female and minority representation
  - » Exempt and non-exempt staff
  - » Business partners
  - » Office Administrative Assistants
  - » Customers and partners, internal and external to your organization
- Provide clear guidance to the interview panel
  - » Explicit criteria to evaluate candidates
  - » Assess candidate’s strengths and weaknesses for each criterion
  - » Use rational judgment in evaluating candidates and be aware of how unconscious bias can affect your assessment
  - » You have final decision authority for candidate selection





- Perform reference checks to gather additional information on the candidate's behavioral attributes and soft skills
  - » Seek relevant evidence and be aware of possible unconscious bias assessments
- Ensure qualified minority and female candidates are always included—an absence of candidates is a red flag

Review HR hiring metrics to look for trends and/or gaps that indicate a potential unconscious bias in hiring. Not all diversity aspects will be represented, but this could provide insight to a particular bias that may be occurring.

A personal example of an inclusive hiring practice is provided by Sara Pecak, Department Manager:

*When I interview candidates, I have them sit for a panel interview and then take them to lunch if they are external. I strive to have a cross-section of my department represented at those encounters, so I will always have at least one seasoned engineer, one newer engineer, and someone aligned with the job specialty I am seeking. My technologists are often included. When I get my feedback, I generally talk to them individually to make sure I'm hearing their unique voice. I often hear the same thing from each of them, but every once in a while, the feedback diverges based off of personality style or experience.*

*"As leaders, our legacy is who we hire and who we promote."*

Mark Rosenthal  
Director, Sandia Labs

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Focus on the candidate's unique skills, experiences, knowledge, education or training, performance history, and behavioral attributes.



## Promoting Practices

As leaders, we are responsible for providing career opportunities to help staff advance within their assigned job families and be eligible for promotion to their desired career path.

To help ensure level advancements promote diversity and are inclusive within all of our job families at Sandia (i.e., member, senior, principal, and distinguished), you can proactively apply the following practices that provide opportunities for career growth and development:

- When making work assignments for high-consequence or high-visibility deliverables, review all potential candidates with your leadership team and avoid unconscious bias in the selection
  - » Consider job-sharing or other arrangements so as to not preclude candidates working part-time
- Assign a mentor to share leadership, technical, programmatic and operational knowledge, skills and experience

## Education

- Ensure that Special Degree Programs are being offered to qualified candidates throughout your organization
  - » University Part-Time Program, Special Master's Program, Doctoral Study Program and Master's Fellowship Program are available for regular, full-time employees to help Sandia meet critical and targeted mission needs with a focus on Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Electrical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering degrees
- Utilize the Tuition Assistance Program to provide education assistance for courses and degree programs in an academic area relevant to their job family
- Utilize the Strategic Education Initiative (SEI) program to promote development opportunities by providing full and part-time employees with Division support funding to allow Divisions to bolster their strategic capability needs
  - » Each Division is allocated limited SEI funds for costs associated with the learning (i.e., conferences, seminars, books, airfare, lodging, transportation, meals, and labor in accordance with the Division's direction; job shadowing, mentoring, and coaching are also allowable with management approval)

*For educational opportunities offered by Sandia, reference the appropriate corporate policy, processes, and procedures for guidance on eligibility requirements and detailed explanation of what is allowable, and use your HR Business Partners as a resource.*



The following practices can be used to ensure diversity and inclusion are key elements of the evaluation process for advancement within a job family:

- Compare current performance against the specified criteria within the job description to determine if the candidate can meet expectations and be competitive at the next level
- Evaluate current performance evidence and do not be biased by initial perceptions, hearsay, or dated performance history
- Ensure you have evidence of sustained high-performance at the current job level so the candidate will be successful at the next level
- For those candidates working part-time, performance evidence needs to be evaluated based on the quality and quantity of deliverables commensurate with the time worked—avoid comparing full-time versus part-time delivery quantities, and focus on the delivery quality; i.e., meeting customer requirements and expectations
- Use rational judgment in evaluating candidates and be aware of how unconscious bias can affect your assessment
- Leadership team should ensure that qualified minority and female candidates are always included for advancement—an absence of candidates is a red flag
- Review advancement metrics within your organization to look for trends and/or gaps that can indicate a potential unconscious bias

Continued >>>

*“Replace, ‘Anyone’  
can be amazing  
with, ‘Everyone’ can  
be amazing.”*

Dr. Vivienne Ming  
Theoretical neuroscientist

## MORAL OF THE STORY

Performance evaluation is about meeting technical, programmatic, and operational deliverables while exhibiting behavior consistent with our core values.



The opportunities for career development advancement into management are possible through the corporate post and bid process.

Similar to the hiring practices, you can tailor your promoting practices or processes to be inclusive and improve the diversity of your leadership team.

- Seek guidance from HR Business Partners to write a job posting that encourages a diverse applicant pool to apply by eliminating gender biased language for the required and desired qualifications
- Utilize your network to seek out and encourage qualified female and minority candidates to apply
- Create a rubric from your required and desired qualifications, and follow it explicitly as you evaluate candidates to avoid “qualification creep” in your decision making
- Use interview questions that focus on leadership behaviors and listen for responses that indicate how the candidate has or would provide a safe and inclusive work environment
  - » Seek guidance and review of interview question from HR Business Partners and Organizational Development professionals
- Consider educational diversity options when promoting; e.g., a mechanical engineer leading a predominately electrical engineering organization
- Establish a balanced interview panel
  - » Female and minority representation
  - » Peer managers
  - » Exempt and non-exempt staff
  - » HR Business partners
  - » Office Administrative Assistants
  - » Business Support partners
  - » Customers and partners, internal and external to your organization
- Provide clear guidance to the interview panel
  - » Explicit criteria to evaluate candidates
  - » Assess candidate’s strengths and weaknesses for each criterion
  - » Use rational judgment in evaluating candidates and be aware of how unconscious bias can affect your assessment
  - » You have final decision authority for candidate selection

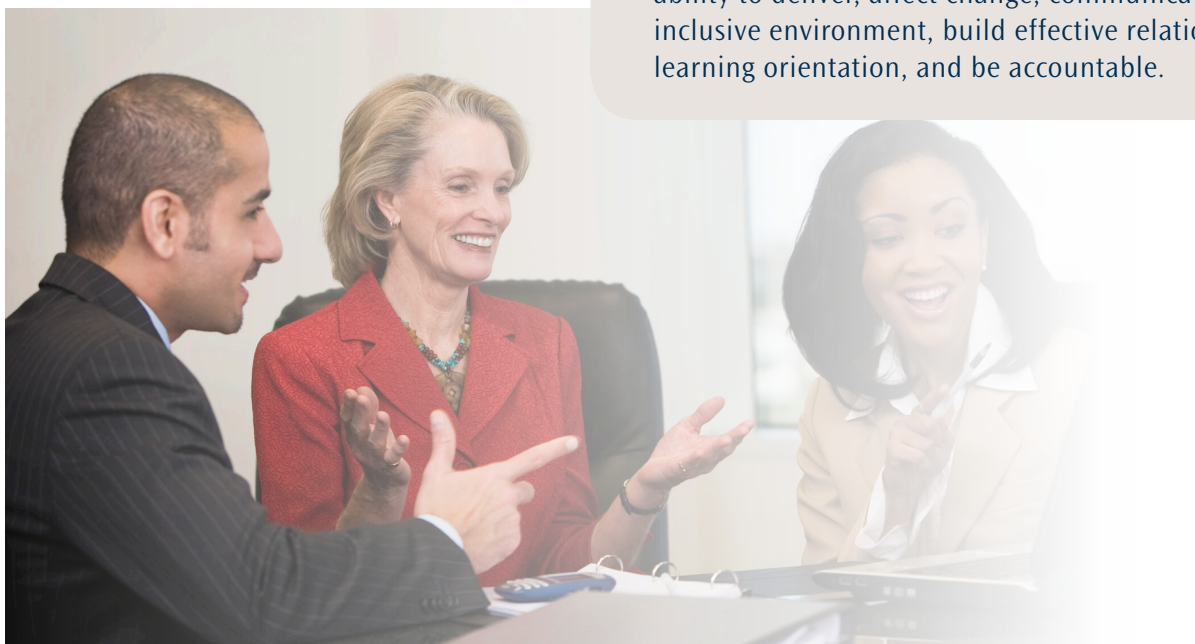
- Perform reference checks to gather additional information on the candidate's leadership, communication, and teaming skills
  - » See relevant evidence and be aware of possible unconscious bias assessments
- You should ensure that qualified minority and female candidates are always included for promotion—an absence of candidates is a red flag

An example of an interview panel for a management position is provided by Mark A. Rosenthal, Director:

*When I establish an interview panel for my manager candidates, I strive to include a cross-section of my programmatic, technical, and human resource partners in addition to their potential customers, partners, peers, and staff. The panels can become quite large, but one of our most important functions as leaders is to promote and develop the next generation of leaders. Therefore, I have found that the diversity from this cross-section of panel members provides additional insight and different observations on the candidate's leadership, communication, and teaming skills than would be obtained by myself or from a smaller set of panel members. Their insight and observations provide me with a much richer set of information for me to make my selection.*

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Focus on the candidate's leadership skills which includes their ability to deliver, affect change, communicate effectively, create an inclusive environment, build effective relationships, demonstrate a learning orientation, and be accountable.



## Communicating Respectfully

Being able to communicate respectfully might be the most daunting task to ensure you provide an inclusive environment; not because of our intent, but because the current expectations are more complex than in the past. It is hard to break behaviors that have been learned and reinforced over a lifetime, but the environment that can be achieved is worth the effort.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

The easy approach is to simply think about the words you are using when communicating and always be respectful of your audience.

Some common examples and guidance are provided, but are not limited to the following:

- Use Inclusive Language
  - » We, Us, Everyone, and Team
  - » “Yes and ...” rather than “but”
  - » Practice “both/and” mindsets rather than “either/or” mindsets
- Language to Avoid
  - » They, Them, and Those
  - » C-Student
  - » B-Team
  - » Stupid idea
  - » Never
- Avoid negative or demeaning language for people with disabilities or health issues
  - » Avoid labeling people as victims of a disability or disease—e.g., person with a disability; or “People living with HIV/AIDS or cancer” rather than “AIDS or cancer victims”
  - » Emphasize abilities, not limitations—e.g., uses leg braces or walks with crutches rather than wheelchair-bound or confined
  - » Bypass condescending euphemisms—e.g., handicap-able, differently-abled, special, or challenged
- Avoid negative or demeaning language when discussing age
  - » Children, Puppies, or Kids
  - » Say “early career” rather than “young”
  - » Say “experienced or mature” rather than “old”

- Use language that does not assume all people are heterosexual or married
  - » Spouses and Partners
- Use gender inclusive references
  - » Family or Loved Ones
- Be thoughtful about the imagery you use
  - » Slave System
  - » Black, Dark and Blind
  - » “Tribal knowledge”
  - » “Off the reservation”
  - » Assimilation
- Understand and respect appropriate uses of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) terminology
  - » It is appropriate to use gay people, gay men/man, lesbian couple, he is gay, she is lesbian; rather than homosexual, homosexuality, or lesbianism.
  - » It is appropriate to use “orientation” or “sexual orientation” rather than “sexual preference, gay/homosexual lifestyle, sexual identity, or same-sex attractions”
  - » Use the word gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender rather than “LGBT.” Use the term that allows your audience to stay focused on the message without creating confusion about your intended meaning.
  - » Transgender is correctly used as an adjective and not as a noun. “Transgender people” is appropriate, but “transgenders” is viewed as disrespectful.
  - » Use transgender person or a transgender person’s chosen name rather than “trans,” “tranny,” or “transgendered.”
  - » A transgender person can be gay, bisexual, or “straight” (e.g., heterosexual); rather than thinking “straight” only applies to heterosexual persons.
  - » Note that in today’s gender-fluid society, some people are starting to reject the use of “he” or “she” and prefer identifying themselves as “they.”
- Use gender neutral language
  - » “Individual Recognition” vs. “Atta Boy”
  - » “Everyone” vs. “You Guys”
  - » They or Them
- Recognize modern language for different cultures or races
  - » “Asian” vs. “Oriental”
  - » “Native American” or “American Indian” vs. “Indian” or “red skins”
  - » “Black American” or “African-American”

*Continued >>>*

*“Let us not act out  
of fear and  
misunderstanding,  
but out of the  
values of  
inclusion, diversity,  
and regard for all  
that make our  
country great.”*

Loretta Lynch  
United States Attorney  
General from 2015 to 2017

- Do not label your foreign visitors as invaders from outer space
  - » “Foreign Nationals” vs. “Aliens”
- Be aware of language that implies a positional hierarchy of less importance
  - » “Just an intern”
  - » “Only a support person”
  - » Non-technical
- Consider the intent of your message rather than relying on potentially exclusive language when recognizing breaks from work that coincide with religious holidays. Be aware that simply wishing someone a happy break may be preferred by those with other religious or secular beliefs. For example, instead of saying “Have a Merry Christmas” during the winter shutdown you could say:
  - » “Have a wonderful and healthy new year”
  - » “Have a wonderful and safe winter break with your family and friends”
- Use of sports analogies or metaphors may not be meaningful to those who have not participated in or have interest in following organized team athletics

Language and terminology are fluid and the key is to understand how a person chooses to identify themselves rather than making assumptions or imposing your own beliefs. Get to know people and ask how they prefer to be identified. An individual’s language and identity are deeply personal and everyone’s identity is worthy of respect.





## Conducting Meetings

When conducting or leading a meeting, it takes a concerted effort on your part to ensure that everyone feels included and can contribute. Some techniques include:

- Monitor “driver” personalities so they don’t dominate the conversation
- Ensure that everyone who wants to participate by calling on those not contributing
- Paraphrase or repeat points made to confirm that everyone understands the context
- Actively seek out different ideas, approaches, or opinions
- If an idea is ‘taken’ from another, reinforce the origin of the idea by stating: “Yes, and that reinforces xyz’s idea, do you agree, xyz?”—Give xyz a chance to say it again!
  - » If you believe this is a problem in your team, ask another team member to pay attention and help you bring it back to the person who was ignored.
- Listen to and value what others think, even though you might not agree—there may be a kernel in there with which you can agree upon
- Use “I” language rather than “you” language
- Use inclusive language, “Yes and...” rather than “but”
- Give credit and recognition to those with a “new” idea or approach
- Follow up off-line with those who are uncomfortable sharing ideas in a group setting to ensure you have their input
- Allow some quiet or thinking time for those that need more processing time.
- Consider alternate ways to collect input: sticky notes, smaller groups, anonymous notes handed to a facilitator to read aloud

*Continued >>>*

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Seek to understand by asking questions.



*“Make a space for  
everybody to  
contribute.”*

JF Nagel  
Retired Director, Sandia Labs

Do not forget to recognize and respect the intellectual diversity of your attendees. This can include:

- Training, education, and background
- Personal experiences and lessons learned
- Programmatic, operational, and technical expertise
- Problem solving and decision-making skills
- Risk acceptance or aversion attitude

Avoid “Group Think” by the meeting attendees because that will exclude alternative opinions. Some helpful techniques include:

- Explore opposing views
- Invite and use Subject Matter Experts
- Include multiple disciplines
- Invite experienced and inexperienced staff

Tracy Peterson, Department Manager, uses the following technique at his meetings to ensure everyone is given the opportunity to provide input and be included:

*As a standing agenda item in both my department meeting and Magnetics Product Realization Team meeting we do a round table. I ask questions to encourage people to talk and not remain silent. It’s a conscious attempt to get everyone to say something. I prompt with words like: “share with the team what you are most concerned about on your project” or “what is the key learning on your project over [some] time frame.”*

## MANAGING A HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENT

As leaders we must engage, take ownership, and actively manage to realize an inclusive and healthy work environment. To start, we lead with guiding principles that follow Sandia's Core Values:

- We serve the nation
- We team to deliver with excellence
- We respect each other
- We act with integrity
- We live safe and healthy lives

Exemplify on a daily basis our Sandia National Laboratories Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct, "...treat people with respect and dignity, encourage diversity and diverse opinions, promote equal opportunity for all, and help create an inclusive and ethical culture".

Communicate often because a healthy work environment is where information is readily shared in a timely manner.

*Continued >>>*

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Communicate early and often to your organization.





Recognize how you talk about your work environment when communicating. It is helpful to explain the “why” before the “what” so everyone understands the vision and purpose.

Recognize and reward examples of diversity and inclusion that have contributed to a healthy work environment.

Realize that as a leader your work habits set expectations for achieving high performance that may not contribute to a healthy work environment or a good work-life balance. Common examples witnessed throughout Sandia include:

- Sending emails on the weekend or late at night
- Working habitually on the weekends
- Maintaining a 10 to 12-hour work day schedule
- Not taking time off for lunch
- Not taking your 9/80 day off
- Traveling during late hours or taking the last-flight-out
- Maxing-out your vacation and flex time

Provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for employees new to your organization through scheduled onboarding sessions and taking time to meet with them individually. Ensure they are engaged with Sandia’s New Employee Connect: Excellence from the Start program and that they are assigned a “Buddy.” The “Buddy” will partner with the new employee during their first three months of employment and offer information on day-to-day aspects of working at Sandia. More importantly, the “Buddy” will offer encouragement, knowledge, and resources as the new employee integrates into the Sandia cultural, social, and professional work environment. Consider assigning a mentor to share technical, programmatic, and operational knowledge and experience.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Sandia provides options and resources for leadership to improve the work-life balance and address personal commitments or unique needs for those employees requiring time away from work.



To retain employees that have personal commitments or needs requiring time away from work, a Leave of Absence (LOA) allows them to apply for an absence from work without pay for an extended period and receive credit for previous service upon reinstatement. Eligible employees may be granted a LOA in the following categories: Child Care; Personal; Educational; Special Case; and Military Service. Included in LOA options is the U.S. Department of Labor Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) where eligible employees can take up to 12-weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for specified leave entitlements.

Sandia's Human Resources Leave Benefits Administration team can provide answers on eligibility requirements and details for available leave options.

The Leave Benefits Administration team also has an Expectant Parent Program (EPP) to help with benefits for parents expecting a child, waiting for an adoption, or foster child replacement. The EPP provides the following information:

- Explanation of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
- Review necessary forms and submission dates
- Clarify time charging best practices
- Other good-to-know information, including infant/child CPR classes, breast pump information, and location of Sandia nursing mothers' rooms.

To help foster an improved work-life balance and recognize the unique needs of individual employees, Sandia provides options that include working part-time, alternative schedules, telecommuting, and virtual work. Management approval is required to ensure compliance with eligibility requirements and that business needs or mission deliverables can still be met when using these different work options.



## PART-TIME

While part-time employment is not the prevailing method of employment at Sandia, it is authorized for limited periods (that are defined by and can be renewed by the manager) to eligible, on-roll employees when circumstances and business needs allow.

Question your assumption that a particular work assignment requires a full-time employee and be open to part-time opportunities. For example, if a full-time person has multiple job assignments, clearly any one of those could be done by a part-time person.

Job sharing a work assignment between part-time employees can be used to meet deliverables that require a full-time employee. This can be effective when the part-time employees have commensurate capabilities and skills.

For part-time work, set clear performance expectations where the employee must be flexible to address time-urgent issues, deadlines, customer visits, etc.

For those employees working part-time, performance evidence needs to be evaluated based on the quality and quantity of deliverables commensurate with the time worked. Avoid comparing full-time versus part-time delivery quantities, and focus on the delivery quality; i.e., meeting customer requirements and expectations. Bottom-line; it is inappropriate to degrade performance ratings based on part-time status.

## ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULE

Another option to help an employee meet their personal needs or commitments is to determine whether a particular work assignment is amenable to following one of the alternate work schedules permitted within corporate policy. If business needs allow, short-term schedule deviations (example: leave early one day, stay late the next) may be approved at management's discretion.

## TELECOMMUTING AND VIRTUAL WORK

Telecommuting and virtual work is considered an effective means of meeting mission needs while providing employees options that reduce commute times and environmental effects. Not all jobs may accommodate this work option due to the business, security, and operational needs. Note that telecommuting and virtual work is not an entitlement or required employee benefit.

*For these work schedule options, reference the appropriate corporate policy, processes, and procedures for guidance on eligibility requirements and detailed explanation of what is allowable, and use your HR Business Partner as a resource.*

Additional options provided by Sandia to improve work-life balance and meet specific needs of individual employees is the Vacation Buy Plan and Vacation Donation Plan.

### VACATION BUY PLAN

Designed to allow an eligible employee to purchase additional vacation time on a pre-tax basis. Purchasing vacation allows an employee to obtain additional paid time off without being financially impacted all at once.

### VACATION DONATION PLAN

An employer-paid plan that allows employees an opportunity to apply for donated vacation outside of their standard accrued leave. Employees may request hours from the Vacation Donation pool. The Vacation Donation pool is populated with vacation hours that are not accrued due to the 240-hour maximum vacation leave balance.

For these vacation plans, reference the appropriate corporate policy, processes, and procedures for guidance on eligibility requirements, timing for implementation, and detailed explanation of what is allowable, and use your HR Business Partner as a resource.

As leaders, we must assist our staff to meet the challenges of managing work and personal responsibilities. To help balance those commitments, Sandia's Health Benefits Employee Services offers Workplace Options; a resource and referral service. Workplace Options helps you balance your work, family, and personal life with services like:

- Finding child or elder care arrangements
- Locating adoption services
- Identifying educational services
- Finding financial and legal resources
- Getting help with travel information
- Identifying volunteer opportunities
- Locating health/wellness services
- Identifying summer camp options
- Locating a pet sitter



Our Health Benefits Employee Services (HBE) is constantly updating and adding to our employee benefits. Visit their web site to obtain current information on available options at <https://hbeupdate.custhelp.com/app/>.

## ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Encourage your staff and managers to give back to their community through financial contributions or volunteering. Be careful not to imply that their community involvement is required because this is a personal choice.

The following list of community organizations and educational programs are just examples where Sandians have donated or volunteered, but in no way imply a set of preferred organizations:

- Making contributions to:
  - » United Way Campaign Employee Caring Program (ECP)
  - » Shoes for Kids Programs
  - » Holiday Gift Giving Drive
  - » Food Bank Drives
  - » Blood Drives
  - » Book and School Supply Drives
  - » Help the Homeless Campaign
  - » Or other organizations that give back to the community
- Giving your time to volunteer programs:
  - » Habitat for Humanity
  - » Make a Difference Day
  - » Food Banks and Shelters
  - » Hospitals
  - » Or other programs that support those in need
- Participating in educational programs:
  - » Sandia's Hands-on Minds-on programs – Dream Catcher Science Program, MANOS, or HM Tech
  - » CroSSLinks Science Volunteers
  - » Family Science Night and Math Night
  - » Cyber Technologies Academy and CyberPatriot
  - » Department of Energy Science Bowls
  - » NM Electric Car Challenge
  - » Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Programs and Tutoring
  - » Science Fair Judges
  - » Or other programs that promote STEM education of a diverse population





Set up an event with your organization to volunteer time in our community. This can be a terrific teaming exercise and it brings an increased awareness of the needs within our community. These activities encourage people to be more accepting of diversity and thus promotes inclusion. Remember to follow corporate policy, processes, and procedures for appropriate employee time charging. Ensure that everyone understands that their participation is voluntary and a personal choice, not a management mandate.

An illustration of connecting teaming activities and community involvement is provided by Tana Lucy, Retired Senior Manager:

*Volunteering is good for the body and mind (and business)!*

*Our managers recently volunteered at the Roadrunner Food Bank of New Mexico as a backdrop to our strategic planning and team building efforts. The Roadrunner Food Bank is dedicated to stamping out hunger in New Mexico. Volunteer work consists of sorting and packaging tons of healthy food for distribution across the state to those less fortunate. The work is stimulating, rewarding, and physically exhausting! The work brought to the forefront our sense of community and inclusion which contributed to a highly successful planning session and broke down communication barriers within the team.*

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Be inclusive by sharing your time, talent, and resources.



## MENTORING

Observe a leader who does a good job at establishing a healthy work environment in their organization and ask them to be your mentor.

As leaders, identify mentors for your staff and managers to help develop their careers and provide an opportunity to have a thought-partner. While there is a lot to be said for mentoring relationships of people who are similar, another important point is that matching people different from one another (male/female, researcher/product engineer, etc.) is a great way to build each participant's perspective on diversity and learning of how to be inclusive.

In addition, encourage your staff and managers to share their unique knowledge, expertise, perspectives and experiences by being mentors. Frequently there is a mutual benefit in the relationship in that the mentor can learn a great deal from the mentee.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Mentors should both support and challenge you.

Support and encourage participation in one of the many Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) to network and establish mentoring relationships that promote discussion of important topics, and to make a connection with others at Sandia.

#### **SNL/NM Employee Resource Groups:**

- Black Leadership Committee (BLC)
- Sandia Women's Action Network (SWAN)
- Early Career Outreach (ECO)
- Military Support Committee (MSC)
- Hispanic Outreach for Leadership and Awareness (HOLA)
- Disability Awareness Committee (DAC)
- Asian Leadership and Outreach Committee (ALOC)
- American Indian Outreach Committee (AIOC)
- Sandia Pride Alliance Network (SPAN)
- Christians in the Workplace Networking Group (CWNG)
- Advancing the Next Generation of Leadership Excellence (ANGLE)

#### **SNL/CA Employee Resource Groups:**

- African American Outreach Committee (AAOC)
- Asian Pacific Leadership Committee (APLC)

- Hispanic Leadership Committee (HLC)
- Foreign National Networking Group (FNNG)
- Sandia Women's Committee (SWC)
- Christians in the Workplace Networking Group (CWNG)
- Administrative Professionals' Council (APC)
- Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Networking Group (SPAN – California)
- Sandia Military Committee (SMC)

The following personal story from Tommy Woodall, Senior Manager, tells why he was motivated to get involved and participate in the Sandia Women's Action Network or SWAN:

*As a single dad, when my sons were younger, I used much of my vacation time driving on field trips, coaching little league, etc. I would routinely hear praise from peers and superiors about how great it was that I was so involved with my sons. When my female colleagues in similar situations did the same things – drove on field trips, coached their son's basketball team, etc. – I would hear that they were not serious about the mission or they weren't dedicated to the organization. Observing these inequities motivated me to work to have their contributions recognized in a similar light to my own and opened my eyes to what I see as a double standard. This work continues today and in part is why I continue to be a member of the SWAN Council. So-called "micro-inequities" can have tremendous impact on career trajectories. I believe all of us should work to mitigate the unconscious bias at the root of such inequality.*

Robin Ohlhausen, Department Manager, shares her mentoring journey and its impact on helping her make more inclusive decisions:

*As a new Manager, I had the opportunity to mentor with multiple people. One who has a similar personality and views as myself, one who like myself is a female, but has a very different personality, and two Senior Managers, one of which is Hispanic and in a totally different field from my work. At first, I was skeptical of spending so much time in mentoring relationships, but after a year, there is significance in each relationship and all four of the mentorships are continuing in various levels of commitment. I have greatly valued the perspective and insight of each person and it has allowed me to see issues from multiple views and helped me to make more inclusive decisions.*

## PROMOTING AWARENESS

We must continuously promote awareness of diversity and a functional, inclusive work environment to affect change. Some activities include:

- Share your behavioral expectations for inclusion during onboarding sessions with new employees and routinely with your organizations or teams
- Sponsor, promote, and attend diversity and inclusion learning and awareness sessions
- Contact a member in the Diversity & Inclusion Organization for support
- Contact your respective Division Diversity & Inclusion Ambassador or Corporate Diversity Team representative for support
- Promote and attend social style or personality learning and awareness training
- Provide learning opportunities and resources to understand and mitigate unconscious bias decision making
- Send out periodic email vignettes on inclusion
- Establish a recognition program for implementing diversity and inclusion or utilize the existing Heart of Diversity Award program run by the Diversity & Inclusion Organization
- Get engaged and involved in diversity and inclusion programs
- Constantly challenge your own unconscious bias when making the myriad of management and leadership decisions; e.g., establishing project leadership and team composition, making work assignments, acknowledging contributions, etc.



Diversity &  
Inclusion

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Promoting awareness of diversity and inclusion ensures continuous learning.

Sandia's Diversity & Inclusion Organization is a terrific asset for providing local learning, awareness, tools and resources for improving diversity and inclusion. They have multiple programs available and are constantly adding new material. Visit their web site:

<https://sharepoint.sandia.gov/sites/Diversity/SitePages/DIO-homepage.aspx>

An example of sharing behavioral expectations related to establishing a team with cognitive diversity in mind is provided by Bernie Gomez, Senior Manager:

*When a team is to be formed for a project, I have a dialogue with the leader to ensure we have a common understanding of the value proposition for cognitive diversity and its emphasis on diversity of thinking. This dialogue touches on many topics such as how diversity and inclusion increases innovation, how to ensure we have different perspectives, different ideas, different approaches to complex problems. We also discuss how unconscious bias may lead us to establish teams that do not exhibit diversity and inclusion. Finally, we discuss the need to make a conscious effort to ensure the team is diverse. These discussions are a key part of setting expectations.*



## PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

We must foster a safe environment to receive critical feedback and to address behavior issues or conflict that negatively impact our ability to provide a healthy work environment.

When an issue is raised or identified it is important that as leaders we respond immediately by validating the employee's experience and then working quickly to address the situation with all involved parties. Use available resources for resolution, including your management, HR Business Partners, Employment & Labor Relations, Ethics Advisory & Investigative Services, and legal counsel if necessary.

Options to provide a safe environment include:

- Have an open-door policy to discuss concerns regarding behavior or conflict that violates our Corporate Core Values, "Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct," and guiding principles for Inclusion
- Sanction and encourage escalation up the management chain if resolution of behavioral issues or conflict is not addressed at lower levels
- All levels of management need to listen and take immediate action to address unacceptable behavior or conflict
- Provide a venue or process for non-attribution to discuss concerns regarding behavioral issues or conflict by staff or management
- Monitor and reinforce your staff, managers, and peers for behavior that provides an inclusive and healthy work environment
- Have an awareness for conflict that results from explicit or implicit bias decision making
- Become and advertise that "I am an Ally" for people to know that you provide a safe environment to discuss and address behavioral issues associated with the LGBT community— "I am an Ally" magnets can be displayed in your office and are available from SPAN and the Diversity & Inclusion Organization
- Solicit from your organization what operational processes, approaches, or procedures should be changed to address different personal needs or constraints so that individuals are not excluded from meetings or work assignments
- During organizational meetings include periodic discussions about conflict resolution and effective methods to accommodate different personal needs or constraints
- Provide critical feedback to your staff, managers and peers regarding behavioral issues that do not promote diversity or facilitate inclusion—Be clear, accurate, factual, and respectful





An example of Sandia management providing a safe work environment is illustrated by an anonymous R&D technical staff member:

*A few years ago, a team member had a concern about the work I had supervised in our lab. Without first discussing the event with me, he assumed the error had been made by the female members of the team and suggested retraining us in an email to the entire team while I was out on travel. My manger immediately called me back as soon as I emailed my concern, validated my feelings and encouraged me to formulate a response appropriate for my role as team lead. Once I had responded to this email, they supported me and worked with my colleague to understand my response. My manager then interviewed women in our center to determine if the problem extended beyond our group and if more action should be taken. This response was very cognizant of team dynamics and our need to work together going forward.*

## KEY TAKEAWAY

A safe environment is critical to a healthy and inclusive work environment.





*“Excellent firms  
don’t believe in  
excellence — only  
in constant  
improvement and  
constant change.”*

Tom Peters  
Coauthor “In Search of  
Excellence”

## CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVING

Continuous improvement is necessary to achieve excellence in providing an inclusive work environment and promoting diversity.

- Actively search for information on diversity and inclusion to maintain awareness of the latest tools and practices, current subject matter expert’s guidance and recommendations, emerging sensitivities, and modern terminology or lexicon
- Provide opportunities and resources to promote awareness and continuously learn about diversity, inclusion, and unconscious bias decision making
- Solicit feedback, directly or indirectly, to determine if your organization provides a welcoming environment for diversity and inclusion
- Identify and collect metrics to status progress; i.e., composition of interview panels, degree of actionable feedback in performance management, extent of using part-time or telecommuting, frequency of awareness sessions, etc.
- Manage a healthy work environment by monitoring vacation and flex time to ensure that time-off from work is exercised
- Conduct exit interviews using an independent party
- Hold focus groups to identify what is working well and how can it be shared, what is not working and how can it be fixed, and what is not being done and should be added to promote diversity and facilitate inclusion

### KEY TAKEAWAY

A learning organization values continuous improvement.

## RESOURCES

### Group Websites

Diversity & Inclusion Group

<https://sharepoint.sandia.gov/sites/Diversity/SitePages/DIO-homepage.aspx>

Health Benefits Employee Services (HBE)

<https://hbeupdate.custhelp.com/app/sandia>

NM & CA Outreach Comitte Groups

[https://sharepoint.sandia.gov/sites/ES\\_NEC/nec\\_participate\\_resources.aspx](https://sharepoint.sandia.gov/sites/ES_NEC/nec_participate_resources.aspx)

### Diversity & Inclusion Resources

Unconscious Bias

<https://sharepoint.sandia.gov/sites/diversity/SitePages/UnconsciousBias.aspx>

Inclusion Insights

<https://sharepoint.sandia.gov/sites/diversity/SitePages/Inclusion-Insights.aspx>

Workshops-in-a-Box

<https://sharepoint.sandia.gov/sites/diversity/SitePages/Workshops-in-a-Box.aspx>



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